

(Lights up. The space is empty but for a tall, metal ladder up stage and a pair of black, men's dress shoes, down stage. From the back of the house, a large woman ambles forward dragging a cart, bits and pieces of her life peeking through its frame. Her head is jammed atop a giant body. She wears layer upon layer of clothing: socks, bangles, a trench coat, a hat. She looks like someone, sadly, you'd avoid on the street. A great slash of red lipstick on her thin lips. Russian Red, Mac, \$16.00 from the store she walks by daily. She discards her clothing in uneven heaps as she speaks. Her voice is calm, matter-of-fact, but the removal of clothing and the things she carries reveal what lies beneath: a landscape of her story; a skin, shed. She is the dance of people you see daily as you walk the street. She steps on stage. From the cart, she removes shoes and boots and arranges them on the stage. A foot-driven narrative: sandals, work boots, high heels, gym shoes, boots, etc. She does this again and again and as she checks and double checks her work, she speaks.)

It was the week everyone called me Wonder Woman.

(Beat.)

I wore red lipstick and my hair was dark.

Dark-ish.

So all the drunks on the street crossed on the diagonal.

Pointing.

(On the diagonal, she moves.)

At me.

(pointing) *Wonder Woman*.

They were drunk.

Drunk-ish.

Whatever.

And not just one drunk.

But many.

Many drunks crossed on the diagonal.

And many drunks called me.

(pointing) *Wonder Woman*.

It was (and is) New York City.

(She pulls out a pair of women's flats from her trench coat pockets. Tosses them.
A few pens and pencils pop out as well. A photo. Some change.)

It meant (and means) nothing.

Nothing.

(She steps on the flats, now discarded, and bounces.)

It was Tuesday.

Early morning.

Light eight.

And I was helping my friend with her two pugs.

Dogs.

George and Lola.

They, the three of them, lived on the upper west side.

So I took the train from downtown.

Where I lived.

To uptown.

To help my friend and her two pugs.

George and Lola.

When I finished, it was about nine.

So I left them.

The three of them.

My friend.

George and Lola.

And I walked.

(Short beat.)

It was a beautiful day.

A gorgeous day.

And it was just beginning.

(Takes off her trench coat. Pulls tokens and MTA cards from her pockets. A few pens, a token, may fall to the floor. A jammed up newspaper. A ring. It all scatters. She clutches the MTA cards, the tokens, perhaps a photograph, in her palm.)

Everyone says that now.

Everyone says.

“It was a beautiful day”.

A “gorgeous day”.

I know.

But it was (and it is).

And so.

I say it here.

(She places the rumbled trench coat next to the man's dress shoes. It rests in a heap.)

It was a beautiful day.

(Short beat.)

So, at about 9:00.

I made my way to the subway.

Left my friend.

George and Lola.

To go back downtown.

To the bottom of the island.

Back home.

Back to my home.

Where I live.

But.

Something was wrong at the 59th Street entrance.

My card ran out.

(A subway card floats from her hand.)

Or maybe we had tokens then.

(A few tokens drop from her palm.)

I don't know.

I don't remember.

Whatever it was.

Whichever it was.

I didn't have what I needed.

I couldn't get on the train.

(She ambles upstage.)

A French person asked for directions.

(Beat.)

A man.

(Beat.)

What?

What?

(Beat.)

I don't speak French.

No.

I'm serious.

I DON'T SPEAK FRENCH.

I'M NOT SMILING BECAUSE I UNDERSTAND YOU.

I'M SMILING BECAUSE I'M UNCOMFORTABLE.

I'm from Chicago.

That's what we do.

(A silk scarf is pulled from under a thick blazer. It runs through her fingers.)

A woman.

A French woman.

Now she asks.

His wife, I think.

Typical.

Doesn't think I can understand her husband.

Thinks she can do better.

All right.

Hit me.

(Beat.)

I DON'T UNDERSTAND YOUR FRENCH.

EVEN THOUGH I TOOK IT FOR SEVEN YEARS.

DOESN'T MATTER WHO SPEAKS IT.

I UNDERSTAND NEITHER OF YOU.

(Beat.)

They're having trouble getting on the train.

I'm guessing.

Their card ran out.

(A gesture. A card drops. A photo drifts. Maybe an earring. They all scatter.)

Or maybe they didn't have tokens.

(Drops another card; another token.)

Something.

Because they keep talking.

And I start walking.

(ASIDE.)

Not talking to them.

Not understanding.

Figuring it all out.

Took five minutes.

So I walked, with the French, to 50th Street.

Red line.

Downtown.

Five minutes later than I would have.

(ASIDE.)

I don't think this is important.

But it is.

I don't know what time it is when we get on the train.

I kinda lose the French.

(She removes the silk scarf. It falls to the ground.)

Which is fine.

We no longer have anything to talk about.

(The train arrives. She steps in. The train moves and she sways.)

It was quiet.

The train.

Early morning quiet.

New Yorkers on their way to work quiet.

Too early for talking quiet.

For nonsense.

Even for reading.

We go.

(Looks above at the train's map marking the stops.)

One stop.

Two.

On our way downtown.

(Beat.)

I'm thinking about.

Breakfast.

Money.

What's coming next.

My diabetic cat.

Movie I want to see.

Friends I miss.

(smiling) A man I kinda love.

I think about all them.

All at once.

And all on the train.

The doors open.

And in he walks.

(A vest comes off. Small bits of paper, candy, maybe a small child's toy falls from the fabric.)

On the diagonal, this guy.

(Beat.)

He's covered in flour.

In dust.

Something.

Particular.

Can barely see his eyes.

Which are blinking.

(Beat.)

Looks right at me.

(Beat.)

Tells me there are eight planes.

(Beat.)

Eight planes.

What?

Wait.

What?

He says it again.

“There are eight planes.”

(Beat.)

I don't understand.

He's obviously drunk.

Eight planes.

I don't know what that means.

Eight planes.